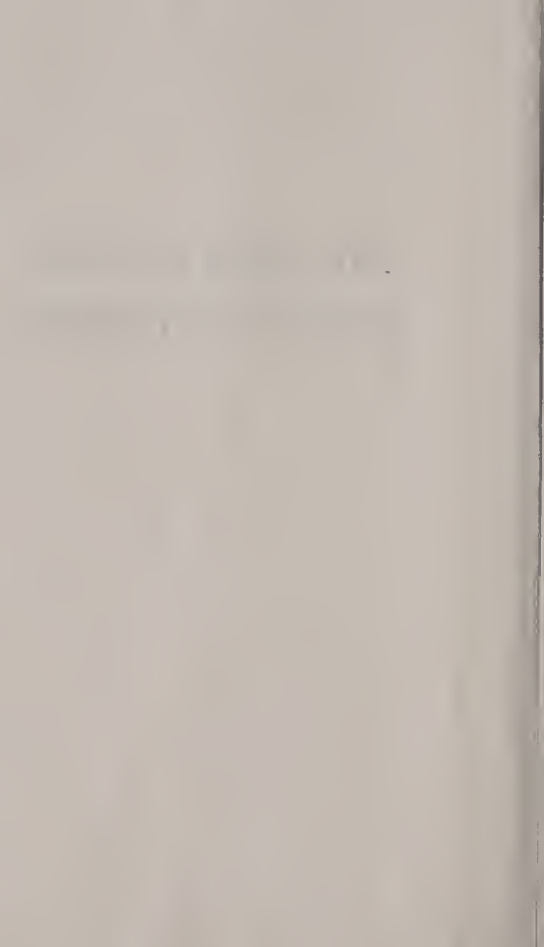


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MED. MISS.

*THE JOHN G. KERR
REFUGE FOR INSANE*

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THE JOHN G. KERR REFUGE FOR INSANE.

Many who read this article, both Chinese and foreigners, will remember with great respect the name of Dr. J. G. Kerr who spent the best of his life in Canton as a medical missionary.

Toward the end it was given to him to carry out his long-cherished plan of opening a hospital for Chinese insane. He died in 1901; but before his death he gave his beloved hospital, the child of his old age, into the hands of the present superintendent, the writer of this article.

History. In 1892 Dr. Kerr procured with his own money a piece of land of about 4 acres located directly across the river from the foreign concession. Recently 2 acres more have been procured. In 1898 Dr. Kerr was able, with funds handed him by a friend, to put up two buildings. For several years none but private patients

were brought for treatment. In 1904 cases began to come from the officials. The police brought the insane from the streets of Canton, and the District magistrate sent the same class of patients deported to Canton from Hongkong. The latter, after preliminary confinement in the government asylum, are brought up in groups to Canton and delivered over to the Chinese official who sends them to this hospital for treatment. Formerly these patients, if dangerous, were locked up in the prison along with the criminals. If not troublesome, they were set free in the streets of this great city to beg or steal, live or die unless happily friends appeared to claim them. The consideration with which they are now treated by the official shows that the Chinese are ready to help their own people when there is a way to do so. The admirably organized Police Department of Canton also, zealous in its desire to clear the streets of insane and otherwise objectionable personages, is glad to make use of this hospital for treatment of the former.

Beside the many private cases from Canton and other parts of the province, patients have been received from Amoy, Foochow, Shanghai, Chinkiang and Tientsin. Two cases were received last year also from Wei-hai-wei sent down by the government of that little colony. We contend that every province should have its own institution of this kind. We are glad to know that Dr. Mallowney of the Methodist Mission in Peking is planning to open a work for insane as soon as funds allow. Any help that can be given him will, we are sure, be gratefully received by him. Meantime this remains the only hospital for insane in the empire until a scheme at present put before the local government by certain of the gentry matures.

Last year all the five buildings were full, and two matsheds had to be erected to take in the overflow for which very harmless patients were selected. The officials were informed that we must refuse to receive patients excepting as some should go away, thus leaving room. We felt we must, if possible, take in the family cases; since

care of the insane in the homes is difficult and often dangerous, usually unwise and sometimes cruel. The officials' cases on the other hand could, if necessary, be detained temporarily in the prisons. Our U. S. Consul applied to the Viceroy for help toward erecting a new building. As a result the hospital received a grant of \$1000 from the provincial treasury. The Police Department also made a grant of \$4200 for the same purpose. Buildings for insane people should be fire proof and strong. And we find we still lack several thousand dollars before we can begin to build. Meantime the rooms are crowded and many patients are sleeping in matsheds, on the veranda and in the bath rooms. And new ones are pressing for admittance.

Since the opening in 1898 there have been admitted 1480 patients. At present there are 250 and more. Last year 239 entered; 196 were discharged. Of the latter, 97 went away well, being $40\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the number admitted, 49% of the number discharged.

The medical staff consists of Dr. J. A. Hofmann and the writer.

Support. The land and permanent buildings were given almost entirely by foreign Christians. The physicians' salaries are provided for in the same way. The running expenses are just met by the income from the patients. The room-rent paid by the well-to-do is an important item. On the other hand there is always a considerable number without friends who are therefore dependent upon the hospital.

Aim. This work was begun and has been carried on as a part of the love-born work of God for man, and we thank and praise the Master for giving us this part in His service for the Chinese people.

Needs. The buildings are full and overflowing. To be able to take in the patients who are continually knocking at the door for treatment, we shall have to turn to the philanthropic sons of China and to her foreign friends residing within her boundaries, as little more can be looked for from Amer-

ica at this late day. We have much satisfaction in stating that certain Chinese gentlemen have expressed their willingness to try to raise a portion of the above amount locally. It is very hard to turn away these poor people. Yet we have had to refuse a considerable number already both from this province and from other provinces.

To build additional, needed houses for patients; fill in low, unhealthy land; provide good, clean water from the river; repair the older buildings; provide proper quarters for the attendants; erect new compound walls; replace the present poor entrance by one worthy of the institution; make other needed improvements and repairs; a sum of \$30,000 is required.

CHAS. C. SELDEN, M.D.

Superintendent.

The Editor

Sir,

Having recently been approached by Dr. Charles C. Selden, Superintendent of the Refuge for Insane, founded at Canton by the late John G. Kerr—a name which will ever occupy a leading place in the annals of medical missionary work in China—with a request for assistance in the matter of providing funds to enable that institution to keep pace, in the matter of building accommodation, with the increasing number of applicants for admission, I was so struck with the unique and beneficent character of the work therein carried on, that I felt that an appeal should be made to a wider public.

It is for this reason that I crave the hospitality of your columns to lay the accompanying statement of its history and of its needs before your readers.

I would address myself, on behalf of Dr. Selden, particularly to those non-Chinese, who, like myself, have had experience of the treatment to which the mentally afflicted in this Empire have to submit, owing to lack of Governmental or private care. Also to those charitably disposed "Guests from afar", whose former beneficence leads one to cherish the hope that an appeal to their generosity in a deserving cause will not be made in vain. But above all, I would endeavour to invoke the concrete sympathy of foreign-educated Young China, which, from the training it has received is perhaps in a better position than the rest of the country to appreciate the humanitarian obligation in respect of providing for the insane, imposed by modern civilisation.

The local Chinese Authorities have made handsome donations towards the Refuge, and are at present contemplating the erection and endowment of a Provincial Asylum. Until that, however, is in working order, the John G. Kerr Refuge remains the solitary institution of its kind within the

Four Seas, and as its doors remain hospitably open, provided accommodation be available, to any member of the blackhaired race, no matter whence he or she may hail, am I wrong in supposing that an appeal to universal China can be made without presumption?

Fuller particulars and reports can be obtained from the Superintendent by whom as well as by the undersigned remittances will be gratefully received.

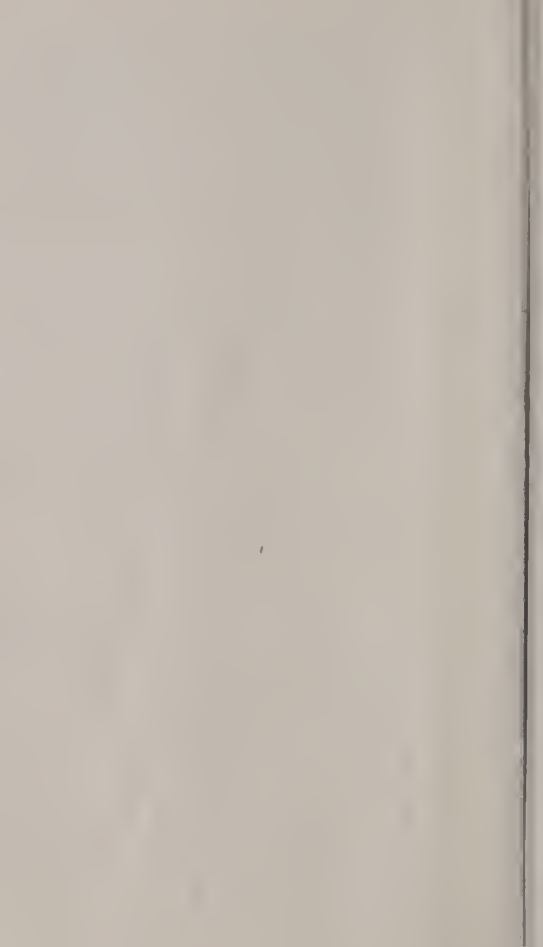
J. W. JAMIESON,
H. B. M. Consulate General.

CANTON, May 5, 1910.

I am heartily in sympathy with the appeal put forward by J. W. Jamieson, Esq., H. B. M's. Consul General, Canton in the interests of the John G. Kerr Refuge for Insane.

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